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HAMILTON LIFE

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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The Circumspectator

Effluvia of an amateur epigrammarian—Being an account of an encounter with L—e.

By Ahlinhi.

Everyone who has been "in love," or thinks he is, or intends to be, knows where he is, yet none agrees.

It is the complexity of the idea of love, not of the emotion, that confounds so many, and yet which defends so few. Love and emotion unite in all the sanctity, but the mating of love with reason results in cerebral bastardy.

Perversely, one wishes the object of his desire to be the demand of all and still expects complete absorption of her in his own personality.

It is the additive effect of love, the inflation of the ego in being assured that one is equal and necessary to the beloved, that provokes the expansive generosity of the lover, especially in largess to the source of his magnanimity.

Until the magic of renovating tarnished illusions is found, love must die severally; nor can youth be restored to senescent sentiments.

In polemics none is more gifted than the lover; he is continually refuting his self-doubts.

Man clings as fast to the concept of lasting love as to immortality, though he is ever hounded by the ghost of transciency.

In Time, the Present, which is a postulated point between the Past and the Future, does not really exist; love exists only in the Present.

The scattered rose-bud becomes crisp fragments of delicate scent; the one cherished in a vase fades, wilts, rots.

Just as it is trite to be born, loving is trite; there is no new way to do it.

Every lover has a different violin from which to draw the melody of love. With the instrument, each varies in the quality of his expression, but here the analogy ends. The violinist has an infinity of keys, chords, and combinations at his pleasure; the lover plays variations of two notes on one string: "I love you. Do you love me?"

The instinct of possession—what its petty delineations do to love: "I am yours—you are mine." How it might augment love with the simple change of formula, "We are ours."

One assumes that he is beloved propter se; he cannot see with what he contrasts, of what he is the reflection.

The Sentimentalist is the Emotionalist unweaned.

Except in prospect or retrospect, the lover must submerge his sense of humor; all the king's horses and all the king's men cannot make laughter mix with a kiss.

Love's language is epithetical. It were easier to find a diamond in an ash heap than a positive among its superlatives and diminutives.

Man is essentially verbal, love is essentially tactual; therefore the vertigo experienced when one meets the actuality of love, and therefore the weak expressions he grasps at for support.

The happy lover cannot dream honestly, for in so doing he must either stunt his dreams or belittle his beloved.

Les Levres De La Desiree

Your languid lips,
Heavy
With the dew of a thousand April mornings,
Anguish
My December soul.

William G. Mulligan, '27.

Window

By D. H. Elliott, '30

My dormitory window is dim, dirty, ugly. The narrowing casement, deep-set in the bare wall, seems like an old French garret. There should be a candle flickering on a table, and the pale, emaciated face of a young poet, sharply white against the thick shadows.

But there are no shadows; it is October, and late afternoon. The four quadrants of distorted glass are only eyes for what lies beyond.

A wedge of campus, flecked with sun. Splashes of color—red, green, gold; red brick of a chimney, and the darker red of a campus path; green of ivy, and the deeper, undying green of a spruce; gold of a window-drape, and the richer gold of frosted leaves. Alpha Delta Phi squats among the trees like a gray stone vault in a cemetery. The bleak walls are bathed in a flood of sunlight, that slants in bars and pours in quivering patches of shimmering gold over the dull, gray stones—the gold of youth, of the blind joy of life, of undefeated hope.

It is later now; the sun has faded. There is no more red; no green; no gold—only gray; cold, dead gray, like the stone walls.

A gust of wind strikes the window, and the sash rattles. . . .

HERE'S HOW

Excepting the sporadic issues of the hybrid "Lit-Gaboon" of last year, there has been no attempt to give vent to the literary endeavors of Hamilton undergraduates for the past four years. Believing that such literary endeavor does exist on the Hill today and that it is worthy of encouragement, the editors of *Hamilton Life* are submitting this literary supplement to the alumni subscribers of *Life*. It is planned to publish three such supplements during the current academic year. If anything, the material included in the future issues should be better than that in the present one.

The financial considerations are at present the important ones, at least from the editors' standpoint. This supplement has no connection with *Life*, other than the use of *Life's* mailing list. It must stand or fall on its own merits, and if it falls the editors fall with it. Undergraduate subscriptions have amounted to nearly half of the necessary total for the three issues. Fifty cents or a dollar from each of the alumni subscribers would easily make up the difference. We should be glad to receive more than that amount from anyone—or less. But we sincerely hope that too many of you will not leave it up to someone else. Make checks payable to Frederic S. Marquardt or Norris H. Hoyt. Thank you.

Some Are Parodies

The Mauve Decayed, or I Can't Bear It

By Carleton H. Davis, '27

They put Grant in his Tomb and twelve years later an Irish serving woman in the home of William Dean Howells fell down several flights of stairs and broke three ribs and a valuable piece of Limoges china while in his home at Brede Place Stephen Crane was heard to say to Joseph Conrad "What do you do with your old razor blades?" and the Polack's answer is unfortunately lost. Up in New England an inscrutible countrified youth in blue overalls hoed uncounted and uneaten turnips little suspecting that within thirty-five years he would be known to all one hundred per cent Americans as Calvin Coolidge while down in Nashville, Tennessee there came the first murmurs of a struggle whose dramatic climax was to come out in print as "Woman, Daughter of Twelve Poisoned." Louisa May Alcott writing moral slop for the young asked an Irish messenger boy if his father drank whisky and his response, now historic, tickled Richard Harding Davis. "No, but Oi'm a wurrkin' man mesilf. Oi don't moind if I do." The last decade of the twentieth century could not begin, but would it?

Dream in Chapel

Shall we kill all our Presidents? That is what we are doing. We are at a critical age, an age of mimry worship, when no one fergits. . . . a . . . fergits. Even though the man who dropped the punt at Harvard remained seriously uninjured, Mr. Smith's brand new Chrysler isn't worth a total loss, while Joe Spagoni, driving a 1910 Dodge, managed to back out gracefully, if he could back out gracefully, which I doubt.

The other day I was talking to a big, full-blooded friend of mine who had been shot in one knee and was crawling on the other. She didn't have any face, but the old flag never touched the ground. And so another business mystery has been solved. Another house of cards has tumbled down. And goodness, how I laughed! I didn't have any net. Funny, I should say it was funny! Laugh, I thought I'd die! But speaking of golf courses, as we weren't, Homer Veppy was not like other boys. The black fog had come. What was he doing, the great God Pan, down in the reeds by the river? Playing football, baseball, basketball, tennis, track athletics, soccer, and various other forms of sport, as he watched three great navy tugs which had never been to Shanghai, and Oh, what a joke on uncle Randolph! There was a stern ending to the canoe, so I must bow.

Epitaph

Translated from the French of François de Maynard.

Here lies Paul, who downward gazed
At meeting people sober.
To heaven oft this prayer he raised,
"Make all the year October."
Herrings red he often drowned
In glasses minus numbers.
You who pass this arid ground
Where he, still thirsty, slumbers,
Know that he would wish his ghost
Had wherewithal to drink your toast.

Malcolm McMartin, '27.

Theme Writing for Freshmen

By G. Willis Cowdre, '30

I can think of but one thing worse than theme writing, and that is—theme correcting. A theme may represent your total brain power, but if it is not to the taste of your superiors there is just cause for lamentation. Therefore, after the manner of Hamlet to the players, I have set down a few rules for the fledgling littérateur.

First of all, in your themes, always avoid prefatory generalities. The term itself should be enough to discourage you, and the above paragraph is an excellent example of what never should be done.

Always say what you mean. Do not allow ambiguity of thought or diction to impair the cerebration of that man who is correcting your theme. Eight or ten masterpieces before yours have served to bring on complete nervous breakdown, and yours probably will finish him off entirely. (For the sake of brevity this bored individual will be mentioned in the future as Mr. X.) Now consider this sentence: "The maiden put her foot in the water and it was dirty." If the final adjective refers to the maiden's anatomy, you have assumed that she belongs to the working classes. Your tendency here hinges on modern realism, and unless you wish to be thought morbid, refrain from things of this sort. If, on the other hand, "dirty" refers to the water, you are beyond hope. The inference says that water of such complexion is connected with some "swimmin' hole" where women are not allowed, and this being the case, you have not only conceived a character of questionable morals, but have created complications which none but a master hand can unravel.

Do not be guilty of that crime called verboseness. The surest remedy for this is to extend the specified 200 word theme to 1500 words. Next, read your theme, and, as you do, check all words which you consider necessary to the thought, etc. Finally, using all the unchecked words, rewrite your work and it will be free from verbosity and likewise of the required length.

Shun and shudder from wise cracks and such familiar jargon as "dumb," "the nuts," "wet smack," et al. Your witticisms failing to put Mr X asleep, will cause such ribald merriment that the theme's learned purpose will be wasted on him. Unless you regard yourself in Shakespeare's class,—and you probably will,—do not use slang. If you wish to obtain the admiration of Mr. X, peruse your dictionary for the obsolete spelling of common words, and if you must employ long words, purposely misspell them. This last shows your nonchalant ability with the English language.

The theme has now been written. Submit it to your roommates or fraternity brothers. They will tell you that it is superb, sublime, and that you have an undeniable gift for writing. At this point smile naively. A week later Mr. Fancher has returned your theme; there will be corrections added to it. Read these slowly and carefully; then approach each fraternity brother stealthily. After you have wrung each of their necks in turn, you can sit down and begin the theme for next week.

From the German Poem Die Beiden

By Hugo von Hofmannsthal

She bore a wine cup from the door—
She held it high as if in pledge—
Both hand and foot so light and sure,
That not a drop o'ersprang the edge.
His hand was strong as he sat there
Upon a black, young, blooded mare;
He soothed her rolling, fiery glance,
And curbed her to a quivering dance.
But when he stooped to take the cup
Out of the hand that held it up,
It got so heavy—on my oath!
And such a trembling seized them both,
That neither hand the other found—
The dark wine splashed upon the ground.

Ian J. Bald, '27.

"Mignonne, Allons Voir Si La Rose"

Translated from the French of Pierre de Ronsard.

Darling, come see if the rose
We saw but this morning unclose
Her crimsoning robe to the sun,
Is losing her petals new-blown
Or her colors as fresh as your own,
At evening, when daytime is done.

Darling, how quickly—alas!—
Her petals have dropped to the grass
And scattered her blush on the lawn.
Step-Mother Nature, how dread,
Since flowers like this one are dead
When twilight has followed the dawn.

Believe me, my darling, this hour,
While life is in crimsoning flower,
In richest and loveliest bloom,
Darling, then gather your youth!
For age, as on flowers, in truth,
Will heap on your beauty the tomb.

Malcolm McMartin, '27.

Oeillades

As her iridescent eyes
Narrow into pale blue oval stones,
Glist'ning,
My thoughts
Lose consciousness and ever go
Sleepwalking,
Speeding beyond the restless clouds,
Into the enchanted sky of Dreams.

William G. Mulligan, '27.

Songs of the Sword Blade

Here's to the brave who died of old!
  Pour me a ruddy flood.
A health to the death of heroes bold.
  Drink it in crimson blood!
Men drink the blood of the juicy grape.
  I drink the blood of men,
Spurting from wounds that yawn and gape,
  Staunched and spurting again.
My glittering tongue licks out and stings,
  Thirsty for reeking gore.
Merrily laughing my whole soul sings
  Over the battle's roar.

Malcolm McMartin, '27.

A Sedimentary Sentiment

(*From the note-book of Eros the Eroder.*)

Thy ungranted kiss was a seed
  Dropped in the cleft of a rocky heart,
Wherein it sprouted and spread with speed,
  Wedging the structure gently apart.
There were the halves of my soul, laid bare
  To the softly sundering acid rain
That walls unleashed from the eyes of Despair;
  Unguarded against the frosts of Disdain.
It quickly crumbled into clay,
  Crisped by the heat of curbed desire.
It awaits a moulder's hand today
  And the glazing kiln of a kinder fire.

Ahlinhi.

Satan's Sonnet

Thine eyes are like dead tadpoles, slimy, red;
Thy nimble brain into thy throat hath run;
Thy bones will soon be whit'ning in the sun;
Tempting thou'lt be when all thy flesh is shed.
Thy skull still has some semblance of a head.
Dost think it will stay thus? Thy life is done;
Thy blood is thick and sticky: death's begun.
Grave-worms will bless thee, maggots be well-fed.
Then ask me why I gloat that in my pow'r
Thou'st put thyself at some forgetful hour.
Why do I laugh; why rub my hands in glee?
Why make this putrefying flesh my goal?
Why snap my slavering jaws in ecstasy?
Thou fool! Thou hast forgot I own thy soul.

George G. Tyler, '27.

Sunset

Are they not lovely, dear, these shell-pink clouds
  Like fretted banners in the western sky?
Alas! how short the time ere night enshrouds
  Them deep in gloom. Yet, glorious ere they die,
Look how they flare to orange sunset fire,
  Then fade to rosy embers,—lose their hue,
Turning to cold grey ash like old desire
  And then to shadows in the paling blue.
Sunset is over; glory gone, and soon—
  Tomorrow, dear—you, too, will go away.
Absence will fall around our present boon
  As growing night falls round about the day.

Malcolm McMartin, '27.

To D---

Death flicks his whip my way
And grins,
With drunk, unfeeling leer,
To take another friend,
One more, from my side.
But I jeer too,
At this mysterious Death.
I fear him not,
For I have you,
And I love.

Lindsley H. Crocker, '27.

Humor—And the Sense of It

By Ian J. Bald, '27

It has been said—by whom, originally, I am not sure—that the main difference between wit and humor lies in the fact that, whereas wit is concerned only with ridiculing other people, humor includes one's self as an object of ridicule. Thus Falstaff was both a wit and a humorist, since he made fun, not only of his companions, but also of his own corporosity. A wit may lack a sense of humor and still be diabolically clever, but a humorist who lacks wit is enervating and boresome.

The sense of humor is the last refuge of the cynic, the first resort of the optimist, the curse of the punster, and the redeeming grace of the brilliant—the sauce of wit, the button on the rapier of sarcasm, the mute in the horn of blatant self-adulation, a perfect weapon of defense in expert hands, and a boomerang in inexperienced ones. The sense of humor is an attribute rare in men, more rare still in women, and most rare of all in adolescents. Some men are humorous because of the women in the world, most women cannot afford to be humorous because of the men in the world, and adolescents have little or no sense of humor because nature wisely refrains from dispensing her most enlightening gift until later, when the situation is past remedy.

The realization of personal funniness—the sense of humor—may be infrequently found among the more intelligent Roman Catholics, more infrequently still among Episcopalians, and most infrequently of all, and microscopically, among Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congressmen, and Rotarians.

Now anyone possessed of a statistical turn of mind and a working knowledge of the laws of probability should have little difficulty in computing what the chances are of adolescents, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congressmen, and Rotarians, seeing the points of the screamingly funny stories served up for their special benefit every month in Henry L. Mencken's delightful little Baltimore journal. Mr. Mencken should know more than to tell stories for people who never read them, and who would not understand them if they did. Mr. Mencken is said to know a few things about America, too. Mr. Mencken must, it seems to me, have a little of the sense of humor, strange as it may seem; otherwise, why does he put such very deep green covers on the magazine which he offers every month to the American public? Perhaps he does know a few things about America, after all.

Humor is all very well in its place, of course, and, if possible, ought to have a part in all our lives. It seems to me, however, that the sense of humor has been overemphasized in American colleges and especially here at Hamilton, where college spirit has had great difficulty in developing. Lack of college spirit is at present our greatest and most pressing problem and will be solved only by careful and properly directed control of our senses of humor.

Why is it that we hear so little of the lack of spirit in "prep" and boarding schools? Simply because the sense of humor has not begun to develop at boarding school age and the boys are willing to die—literally to die—for "dear old Putnam Hall." But the boy has not been many years in college before his sense of humor begins to make itself felt in spite of all efforts to stop it; even before his junior year—if he is very bright—the young fellow has gone so far as to feel some hesitation at the idea of dying for this or any other "old" college.

The growth of such radical ideas is, of course, fatal to the perfect flowering of college spirit and must be suppressed at any cost. But how? The answer is, obviously, by legislation.

Yes, we must do a little legislating; not very much, of course, for there is not a great deal of humor in college to be legislated upon, but just enough to check us at certain times of the year and give our college spirit a chance to sprout and grow, unharmed by withering blasts of collegiate laughter.

First of all, for one week before each of our intercollegiate contests, we ought to prohibit the buying, selling, or exchanging of reading matter which might possibly contain any humor, especially of a collegiate nature. It is true that this action would practically abolish all light and frivolous reading during the school year, but, after all, we have Thanksgiving Day, Christmas and Easter vacations, and the long, summer months in which to relax from that grim battle which is college and to satiate our depraved literary appetites.

To make this censorship plan effective and complete, the entire coaching staff should confer with Mr. Ibbotson some weeks in advance of the opening of college in the fall, to list the banned reading material and, perhaps, to suggest something which the undergraduate might safely read. It must be perfectly obvious that by this method of supervision, the pernicious effects of collegiate humor upon the morale of the college would be greatly lessened.

But, you may say, what of the intercollegiate contests themselves? How are we to control the undergraduate sense of humor on these climactic occasions? Right here is where our Honor System may be put to good use; before any student should be allowed to witness an athletic contest, or to act as linesman, score keeper, or water boy on the field, he ought to be required to write and sign a declaration to the effect that "he would not, at any time during the contest, or between the halves or quarters, allow any light-minded, slanderous, funny, or otherwise injurious remarks to pass his lips, and that, above all, on his honor as a gentleman, he would neither smile, giggle, chuckle, laugh, hoot, or make any other intendedly humorous ejaculations, either at the cheer leaders or at the members of our own or the opposing team."

When precautions such as have been outlined shall have been taken and obedience to their precepts rigidly enforced, the existing curse of humor in colleges will have been effectively eradicated and the athletic age will have dawned in radiance and glory.

Woman

She is a column of ivory steam
  Meant to be molded by lovers' minds
Into the Galatea of their dream;
  But there come always the warping winds.

Ahlinhi.

In Almost Any Magazine

By Earl C. Whitbeck, '27

She drew her chair a little closer to the table, and stretched out her hand toward the sugar-tongs.

"And that is your only reason, Horace?" she asked.

He sighed deeply. "My only reason, Carmilla? No, I cannot say that. Supposing—." He broke off abruptly, and there was a pause. Four lumps of sugar dropped into the cup with a sullen splash.

"But surely," she said with infinite meaning in her voice, "if it happened otherwise, it would be different, Horace; and then, there are consolations. Yes," she repeated dreamily, "there are always consolations. Will you have some cake?"

Stung to the quick by her words Horace started to his feet. "Bah!" he cried, "what a vacuous soul is yours! Do you ever feel the stress of life, Carmilla? The keen bitter-sweet search after the nebulous ideal? The swift, grim, ironic sense of a struggle with an overpowering and unintelligible destiny, that tortures all humanity, and obliges me to talk like this for pages?" And, seizing a large slice of cake in each hand, he devoured them greedily in alternate mouthfuls.

Carmilla arose and moved to the window, gazing wearily at a Standard Oil truck that was passing underneath.

"Misery is the only happiness," she murmured, "and only black things are white."

"Two mental surds," Horace mumbled, his mouth full of cake. "Two brilliant thoughts, and I haven't said anything half as fine as that. Carmilla, the habitual liar is the only truthful man!"

The girl nodded. "What insight!" she said; "what keen perception of the universal muddle. Yes, Horace, it is even as you say. But if you knew the ardent glow of love that surges within me—but, it must not be." And turning toward the fireplace she lifted the poker and stroked it tenderly.

"Certainly not," sobbed Horace. "If I propose to you, you have to accept me or refuse me, and, in either case something would happen. In our stories, Carmilla, nothing ever happens."

"You are right," said the other simply, "you are quite right. Nothing ever happens—only sweet, soulful conversations like this. But what," she asked fearfully, "what shall we do now, Horace? Oh, the grey dreariness of life! What shall we do now?"

"We must wait, Carmilla. We must sit here and drink tea. Oh, how I wish we belonged to Barrie, or even Mencken, then we could do things! But we must wait——wait————————wait."

A Grudge

By Frederick D. Eddy, '29

I have a grudge—one of those grudges that can be satisfied only by writing a theme for English Composition. No doubt I am running my head into a stone wall, a very thick and sturdy stone wall to be sure, but at least I have the satisfaction of bumping my head for a worthy cause. Never will I leave off my ramming, never will I be satisfied until this pet aversion of mine is wiped from the face of the earth. I rail against, I vituperate a particular phase of modern education.

That phase is most aptly described as running education with the throttle wide open. Ever since I entered the kindergarten, right up to the second I write these words, my Old Man of the Sea in education has been that eternal cry, "Hurry up!" I was sick of it in grade school and in high school; I am still sicker of it in college. In elementary schools I couldn't take my time about anything because the teacher stood over me to see that I didn't. If I attempt deliberation in college, I find myself hopelessly left behind, and consequently flunking. I honestly believe this running pell-mell with head down through education, especially in college, is a crime against the average intellect found there.

In English Literature, for instance, we can't stop to absorb the full music and sensuous beauty of Spenser. Of course not. We have to cover ninety pages of close print in two recitations. In Chemistry laboratory we can't stop to take minute pains with an experiment, and give it or its results due consideration. Figuratively we have to "run in high" to keep in sight of the professor's dust. And so it goes all along the line of the curriculum.

Such crazy speed would perhaps be endurable in a single subject, but in six or seven studies it churns my commonplace grey matter into a foam to try to make a creditable showing in any of them.

There is my grudge. Long may it live, and never may it know discouragement.

Fraternity

Anonymous

"It's hot enough here, Phil," says Bob, throwing his coat and vest on the couch, and pushing his armchair back from the fireplace.

"God, yes! we got enough of those planks over by Science last night to start a miniature Hell," answers Phil, gingerly wiping off his forehead and then pretending to wring out a chamois. "I say, Bob, I never saw an elephant sweat before."

"That's all right, bag of bones. I think I see a little dew glistening on *your* brow. How about opening a window?"

"Sure. Go ahead."

"No, you open it. Giraffes are better than elephants at such delicate tricks."

"Damn! It sticks."

The wind howls through; papers rustle; coals flare up; ashes blow everywhere. "Rather a draft," says Bob, subsiding into the most comfortable chair.

"God, Bob, why don't you let another fellow have an easy chair once in a while. Let's change. Oh, never mind, I just remembered. I've lost the shoehorn and I couldn't get you out if you stuck this time."

"Come, come, Lanky. That joke has whiskers on it. Why, even Woollcott has incorporated it in a lecture. But don't you think there is too much of a hurricane?"

Phil goes over to the window and slams it. Then he puts a couple of slats against the two-by-four that serves as a back log. "Make it a little more cheerful," he explains, offering Bob a cigarette. Bob takes it after the custom of roommates, without returning thanks. They smoke their cigarettes in silence. Phil blows rings steadily, a flock of them, heavy and symmetrical, circles of smoke that float gently upward without the slightest imperfection and lose themselves in the flickering shadows of the upper air. Phil watches them with admiring eyes. Twice he glances sidelong to see if Bob, too, is admiring them; but Bob stares straight into the flames, emitting smoke from his nostrils, dragon-like. He finishes his cigarette first, and as he tosses it into the fire, blows a cloud of ghostly smoke from the catacombs of his lungs.

"God! I never saw an elephant beat a giraffe smoking cigarettes before," said Phil. "What's the matter, Bob, nervous?"

"Have a good dinner, Phil?"

Phil nods.

"The Martin?"

Phil nods again. "Sorry you couldn't go."

"Yes. Too much work."

"Not much fun eating alone. I was hungry, though. Two Beta Thetes and three Delta Phis on the Busy Corner waiting for the car. One of them said 'Hello.' Guess the rest didn't know I was there, or if they did, they only said, 'He's nothing but a damned neutral.' God, it makes me sick."

"You're right, Phil. We've got it pretty tough. They make us neutrals and then despise us for being what they made us. When I think of some of the fellows that never get bids, and then some of the fellows that are born with bids in their mouth. . . . "

"God, it makes you want to bust something. I'd like to smash the whole damn fraternity system. I wouldn't take a bid from any of them."

"Are you sure you wouldn't?"

"Yes. Aren't you?"

"I—I—I don't know."

"Well, I do. They're snobs, all of them. They may not mean to be, but that doesn't make it any better. Hell, just look at a bunch of fellows standing around in front of Chapel any morning, and see who talks to the neutrals. And just try sowing a few cheerful 'Hello's' around the campus, and see what a crop of grunts and whispers you'll reap. Some of them are decent enough, but most of them are snobs all the way through. God, I'd like to know how they're any better than I am."

"Yes, Phil, I know. Inferiority complex, and all that stuff. It's bad for you. But you've got to have an inferiority complex if you're a neutral. It's just as if you were an outsider, an undesirable. And what hurts the most is that some of us neutrals really are undesirables, Jews, negroes, Italians, white trash. . . . You know, Phil, the neutral body is pretty large now—easily a hundred; but there aren't very many fellows in it you care to know. Outside of our own little crowd—and there aren't more than fifteen of us—there isn't anyone I care to have for a friend. There isn't anyone I'd want to take home with me. If one of us should drop out, the circle would be pretty small. Just think, Phil, if you or I didn't come back to college—"

"Hell, Bob, don't think of that."

"It wouldn't be much fun for the other. But I've been thinking that that fraternity business isn't going to bother us forever."

"Yes, I'll suppose we'll be 'damnably mouldy a hundred years hence' and all that sort of thing."

"No, that isn't what I mean. I mean we don't feel so strongly about being left out in the cold as we used to. Not all the time, anyway, like we used to last year when we were only freshmen. That first Christmas home and everybody saying, 'What fraternity did you make?' 'Oh.' I used to brood and brood over it. But probably by the time we're seniors we'll forget all about such petty things."

"Well, fat boy, we've advanced beyond the brooding stage, just like you say. I figure I have a chance in cross-country and baseball, and you're doing damn well in publications. Gee, you've got a peach of a chance to be editor—if only you weren't a neutral. Well, cheer up. Maybe we'll rate some bids some day."

"Why, Phil. I thought you said you wouldn't take any of their damn bids!"

"I did. I wouldn't." Some one comes pounding up the stairs, whistling a popular song just a little off key. "That's Jack to see you. Guess I'll go out."

Jack knocks at the door and enters without waiting for an invitation. "Hello, Phil. Hello, Bob. Don't get up. You may not be able to get back in."

"Hello, Jack. Take my chair. I'm going over to Art's."

Phil passes out cigarettes and goes out, slamming the door behind him. Jack pokes the fire and obeys Bob's command to put on another stick. "Nice friendly little blaze," he says. As Jack sits down, Bob catches the glint of the fire on his fraternity pin.

"Jack, I want your advice. I don't expect to follow it, but you're older than I am, and you've been here two years longer, and I'd like to know what you will say. The Beta Thetes gave me a bid tonight. I said if they'd take Phil, I'd come. They said they had considered him but they didn't have room for us both. Of course that isn't the real reason. George Hubert and Phil come from the same town, and George doesn't like Phil at all. So there isn't a chance. And I won't leave Phil; we're too good pals for that. And so I turned them down. Do you think I was right?"

"Well, Bob, is it fair to Phil?"

"Why—what do you mean?"

"Well, if Phil ever gets a bid, and you don't, he won't be able to accept it."

"Oh, I'll never say anything to Phil. And anyway he doesn't want to join any fraternity."

"Yes, I know. He talks a lot. Well, if you haven't told him, I suppose it's all right. But I believe in this world 'every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.' It doesn't pay to be idealistic. I'd accept if I liked the crowd."

"Thanks, Jack. I was pretty sure you'd say that, but I'm going to stick to my decision. Let's talk about something else. What dances are there home Christmas?"

The next evening Bob sat at his desk muttering German sentences to himself. The room seemed very lonely without Phil's light burning, and Phil's merry chatter running endlessly on. The wind, eddying down the chimney, caught up a handful of ashes from the fire of the night before and scattered them on the hearth. Half past eight. Phil ought to be back soon. Surely those were familiar steps in the hall. The door opened slowly. As Phil stood in the doorway taking off his topcoat, Bob glimpsed a tiny shield pinned in his lapel. Bob started a little, then walked over to Phil and, holding out his hand, said with a smile, "Congratulations, old man."

"Thanks, Bob."

Dreaming

We dance on crests of passionate waves,
  And slide down long green swells;
Play hide-and-seek in curious caves,
  And gather fancy shells.
On wings of gulls we merrily ride;
  We watch the spray-spheres' glance,
The flying fish that glitter and glide,
  The dolphins' rolling dance.
I make a throne of emerald ice,
  Its cushions soft, white down.
The courtier seals I slyly entice,
  And a bear to be a clown.
We're weary now, too tired to roam
  The restless, green-gray sea.
I make your bed in a bubble of foam.
  You drift away from me—

Cortland G. Smith, '27.

Poet's Themes

The yearning of a white ship
  For tide and breeze and sea;
The yearning of the light mist
  That veils the lonely tree;
The memory of a red sun,
  A glorious, painted sky;
The memory of a still pond
  Where mournful night birds cry;
The sweetness of a soft chord
  That floats across a bay;
The sweetness of the wild rose
  That scents the breath of May;
The wonder of a still thought
  Or, even of transient dreams;
The wonder nature weaves about
  Trees, flowers, fields, and streams.

Cortland G. Smith, '27.